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ABSTRACT

This collection of abstracts is part of a continuing series providing information on recent doctoral dissertations. The 25 titles deal with a variety of topics, including the following: (1) the effect of reading ability, mode of presentation, and passage familiarity on the general and precise comprehension of expository text; (2) a constructivist perspective on the reading comprehension process; (3) the effect of textual moves and dialogue on the reading comprehension of first grade children; (4) imagery, postquestions, and children's learning from prose; (5) the relationship between cognitive style, motivation, and reading comprehension achievement; (6) the effects of expository textual structure on the reader's ability to form inferences; (7) a function-based comparison of illustrations providing literal and analogical representations on comprehension of expository prose; (8) the effects of different kinds of questions on children's comprehension of stories; (9) an analysis of the process of ambiguity resolution; (10) the relationship among literal and inferential reading comprehension skills and selected cognitive processes; (11) an ethnographic study of comprehension in the beginning reading process; (12) a qualitative study of the elementary age child's interaction with story; and (13) reading as signification. (EL)

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Reading, Comprehension and Memory Processes:

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Abstracts of the following dissertations are included in this collection:

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THE EFFECT OF READING ABILITY, MODE OF PRESENTATION AND PASSAGE FAMILIARITY ON THE GENERAL AND PRECISE COMPREHENSION OF EXPOSITORY TEXT

Order No. DA8502584

CALDWELL, JOANNE SCHUDT, PH.D. *Marquette University*, 1984. 199pp.

The purpose of this study was threefold: to determine if listening and reading result in different forms of comprehension as measured by both recall and recognition tasks; to ascertain the effect of subject prior knowledge upon both modes; and to investigate whether language and reading comprehension are independent or interdependent entities. The subjects were 64 high school students equally divided into good and poor readers. Each subject read and listened to two familiar expository passages and two unfamiliar ones. They were then asked to recall what they had read or heard. They were also asked to recognize explicit, implicit and identical statements as congruent with text content. Recall was scored in terms of the number of explicit, important and idiosyncratic propositions recalled and the specificity of this recall. Idiosyncratic recall was scored separately as either inferences or errors. The between subjects factors were age and reader ability. The within subjects factors were mode of presentation (listening or reading) and passage familiarity or unfamiliarity. Results indicated no significant differences between listening and reading. However significant differences were noted for passage familiarity. Exposure to familiar text resulted in more recall of explicit, important and inferential propositions and greater recognition of implicit statements. Exposure to unfamiliar text resulted in more recall of erroneous propositions and greater recognition of explicit and identical statements. Results were interpreted within the framework of a schema-theoretic view of comprehension processes. An interdependent model of language and reading comprehension was also supported in that good and poor readers differed quantitatively but not qualitatively on all dependent measures.

THE EFFECT OF TEXTUAL MOVES AND DIALOGUE ON THE READING COMPREHENSION OF FIRST GRADE CHILDREN

Order No. DA8428406

COHEN, SHEILA G. SPREIREGEN, ED.D. *University of Kentucky*, 1984. 176pp. Directors: Dr. Connie Bridge, Dr. Peter N. Winograd

This study was designed to examine whether the number of speaking turns (Moves) and the proportion of characters' speech (Dialogue) would influence first grade childrens' comprehension of stories. It was predicted that a low number of Moves and a low percentage of Dialogue would place fewer processing demands on young readers and would therefore be more facilitative of selective aspects of comprehension than a high number of Moves and a high percentage of Dialogue. To examine these predications, 63 first grade students read two stories in one of four passage conditions and responded to open and closed book questions for each story.

The four conditions were created by manipulating the number of Moves and the proportion of Dialogue in the same passage. A low number of Moves was 10 and a high number of Moves was 25 and a low percentage of Dialogue was 20 and a high percentage was 70. Subjects in condition I read stories with Low Moves and High Dialogue. Subjects in condition II read stories with Low Moves and Low Dialogue. Subjects in condition III read stories with High Moves and High Dialogue and subjects in condition IV read stories with High Moves and Low Dialogue.

The data were analyzed using a multivariate multiple regression analysis. Moves and Dialogue were the independent variables and Ability, as measured by a test of Sight Vocabulary, was a control variable. Total Comprehension for each story (open and closed book tests combined) were the dependent variables. The results of this analysis did not verify the hypotheses. Low Moves did not produce significantly better comprehension than High Moves. Passages with High Moves produced significantly better comprehension than passages with Low Moves. With regard to Dialogue, Low Dialogue did not produce significantly better comprehension than High Dialogue. There was no significant difference between High and Low Dialogue.

Because the findings were not as predicted, the reasons for these results were explored and several hypotheses were proposed to account for these findings. The findings are discussed with regard to the hypotheses and to their relationship to previous research. Finally, proposals for future research are suggested based on the findings and limitations.

TEXT PROCESSING AND READER RESPONSE CRITICISM: A CONSTRUCTIVIST PERSPECTIVE ON THE READING COMPREHENSION PROCESS

Order No. DA8426781

CHASE, NANCY DAVIDSON, PH.D. *Emory University*, 1984. 173pp. Adviser: W. Shane Templeton

This study compares four theories of prose comprehension: two from text processing research, and two from reader response criticism. The theories of Walter Kintsch, Jean Mandler and Nancy Johnson, Wolfgang Iser, and Stanley Fish are compared with implications for the concept of readability and instruction. This comparison attempts to gain insight into the variables that contribute to the comprehensibility of a text. Three different variables are considered as contributing to text readability/comprehensibility. These variables include text structure, the reader's pre-existing knowledge of the world, and the reader's knowledge about text structure. These three factors provide the framework for comparing the theories of comprehension examined. Conclusions acknowledge that the commonalities between text processing research and reader response criticism have an impact upon the concept of readability and the instruction of reading. This impact, however, involves verifying several previously identified practices as helpful in enhancing reading comprehension, e.g., schema building activities, directed and shared reading experiences, and attention to the difficulties encountered when using varied types of texts.

THE COMPREHENSION OF RESTRICTIVE AND NONRESTRICTIVE RELATIVE CLAUSE INFORMATION IN WRITTEN LANGUAGE BY SEVENTH GRADE HIGH AND AVERAGE READING ACHIEVERS IN A SUBURBAN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Order No. DA8419810

FINNELL, LILLIAN DORAJEAN, ED.D. *Temple University*, 1984. 175pp. Major Adviser: Dr. Marjorie S. Johnson

Problem. To investigate reading comprehension of relative clause information: comprehensibility of restricive relative clauses compared with phrases and a combination of both (Experiment one): comprehensibility of nonrestrictive relative clauses compared with phrases, separate sentences, and a combination of the three (Experiment two). Reading achievement level of subjects was also studied.

Procedure. One hundred ninety-eight seventh graders, divided equally into high and average readers, participated in experiment one; 200 were also divided equally into high and average readers in experiment two. Achievement groups were established with scores from the reading comprehension subtest of the *California*

Achievement Test, Form C, administered in the fall of 1982.

Using social studies type content, a set of passages was prepared for each experiment. Comprehension was evaluated by an every-fifty-word cloze deletion pattern.

Each subject was pretested on a random sample of words from the passages to omit subjects with word recognition difficulties. Subjects were then administered one passage version for each experiment.

Anovas, 2 x 3 and 2 x 4 (Reading Achievement Level x Passage Version) tested six hypotheses, accepted at .05.

Results. In both experiments, no difference was found among language structures; statistical significance was found for the reading achievement variable. No interaction was found in either experiment. Post hoc examination of raw data revealed differences in comprehension of restrictive relative clauses and phrases.

Conclusions. Both achievement groups comprehended relative clauses, phrases, separate sentences, and combinations with a similar degree of accuracy.

IMAGERY, POSTQUESTIONS, AND CHILDREN'S LEARNING FROM PROSE

Order No. DA8501319

FRISON, CARROLL GERARD, JR., ED.D. *Arizona State University*, 1984. 84pp.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of postquestions and imagery on children's learning from prose.

The sample consisted of 256 fifth-grade subjects. Subjects were randomly assigned to one of six treatments resulting from crossing two imagery conditions (imagery, no imagery) with three questions conditions (inserted questions, massed questions, no questions).

The materials were six treatment-based versions of a 1,400-word passage on the tarantula. Subjects worked through the materials, then completed a 30-item short-answer test and an attitude questionnaire. The test was readministered after three days.

Test data were analyzed using a 2 (imagery) x 3 (questions) x 2 (time of test) analysis of variance with repeated measures on the last factor. Study times and attitude questionnaire responses were also analyzed.

On the 30-item immediate test, mean scores for the questions conditions were 24.12 for massed questions, 24.00 for inserted questions, and 15.73 for no questions. Scores for the questions conditions were significantly higher than those for the questions condition, but were not significantly different from each other. Mean scores for imagery and no imagery on the immediate test were 21.35 and 21.04 respectively, a non-significant difference.

The overall mean score was significantly lower on the delayed test than on the immediate test. However, the pattern of scores by treatment was consistent across the two tests.

Study times for the three questions conditions were significantly different from each other. Massed questions required the most time and no questions took the least. Imagery required significantly more time than no imagery.

Questionnaire data of their treatments. Significantly more subjects in each of the questions conditions than in the imagery condition reported that their treatment was helpful. Subjects in the inserted questions condition responded more frequently than those in the other treatments that the passage was easy to read.

The results indicate that questions are an effective prose learning strategy for fifth-grade children. Convenience and study time are important practical factors to consider in choosing between a massed and an inserted question strategy.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COGNITIVE STYLE, MOTIVATION, AND READING COMPREHENSION ACHIEVEMENT

Order No. DA8418738

HARRISON, ORDIA LIMAR, PH.D. *Washington University*, 1984. 312pp. Chairman: Dr. Richard deCharms

The primary aim of this study was to investigate the effects of cognitive style and motivation on performance on people-oriented and thing-oriented reading comprehension passages. The two independent variables were cognitive style (field-dependence, field-independence) and empathic motivation (people-sensitivity/people-insensitivity). The dependent variable was reading comprehension. Gender was included as an additional variable.

Ninety-eight children from three sixth grade classrooms in a middle school which is part of a predominantly Black low socio-economic urban school district comprised the population. Forty-six of the children were females and fifty-two were males. The children ranged in age from 11 to 13.

It was predicted that people-sensitive children would achieve higher scores than people-insensitive children on people-oriented reading comprehension passages, and field-independent children would achieve higher scores than field-dependent children on thing-oriented reading comprehension passages. It was further predicted that males and females would not differ on field-independence and that there would be no relationship between people-sensitivity and field-independence.

The results supported these predictions. Two unexpected findings were that people-sensitive children scored slightly higher than people-insensitive children on thing-oriented reading passages, and field-independent children scored significantly higher than field-dependent children on people-oriented reading comprehension passages. Results from the present study provide information for educators, helping them to gain a better understanding of the relationship between cognition, motivation personality characteristics, and the acquisition of knowledge.

THE EFFECTS OF EXPOSITORY TEXTUAL STRUCTURE ON THE READER'S ABILITY TO FORM INFERENCES

Order No. DA8504182

HELMS, BONNIE LUCILLE, PH.D. *The University of Toledo*, 1984. 214pp.

The purpose of this study was to determine the effects of textual structure of expository text on reader's inferential comprehension. Three passages were randomly chosen from the social studies text, *People and our world: A study of world history* by Kownslar and Smart. The three passages were rewritten to include relationships in the text thought to facilitate inferencing, and are: (1) a logical inference with enable causation; (2) a logical inference with reason causation; (3) an informational inference with result causation; (4) an informational inference with initiation causation; (5) an informational inference with enable causation (when); and (6) an informational inference with enable causation (where). These passages were termed facilitating passages. The logical inferences answer the questions of how and why. Informational inferences answer the questions, what, who, when and where.

Passages were again rewritten to omit the relationships thought to facilitate inferencing. These passages were termed inhibiting passages.

The taxonomy of relationships thought to facilitate inferencing was developed by the experimenter. This taxonomy is based upon an inference taxonomy created by Warren, Nicholas, and Trabasso (1979), and also upon the basic unit of relationship between conceptualizations, the causal link (Schank, 1975a, 1975b).

A checklist developed by the experimenter based upon the taxonomy of inference facilitating relationships was used to evaluate the passages. These passages were evaluated by judges to verify the ratings of facilitating or inhibiting.

A verification of materials was conducted prior to the experimental study. Subjects were from a tenth grade Honors English class at

Northview High School. The subjects were asked to judge which of the two versions of the passages answered the posttest questions best. Results showed the ratings of facilitating passage and inhibiting passage to be valid.

Prior to the experimental study, subjects were given a cloze test/pretest to determine their frustrational, instructional, or independent reading level. These three reading levels were analyzed by reading level interaction with the rating of the passage (i.e., facilitating or inhibiting). The experimental variables formed a 2 x 3 factorial design (passage structure by reading ability). Dependent measures included a free recall measure, and five inference posttest questions on each passage.

A FUNCTION-BASED COMPARISON OF ILLUSTRATIONS PROVIDING LITERAL AND ANALOGICAL REPRESENTATIONS ON COMPREHENSION OF EXPOSITORY PROSE

Order No. DA8424332

HURT, JEFFRY ALAN, PH.D. *University of Kansas*, 1984. 122pp.

This study demonstrates the effectiveness of two illustrations, which possess differences concerning the type of representational format they provide in supplementing text, in serving two distinct instructional functions, both of which assist in the overall comprehension of a textual passage. Specifically, an illustration which provides a literal representation of information introduced in the passage is shown to be more effective in serving the instructional function of identifying physical properties of phenomenal information introduced in the text. Conversely, an illustration which provides an analogical representation of information introduced in the passage is shown to be more effective in serving the instructional function of clarifying nonphenomenal information in the text. These findings suggest that, in instructional situations similar to the one in this study, illustrations possessing literal representation are more effective than illustrations possessing analogical representation when the instructional function to be served is identification of properties of phenomenal information, and illustrations possessing analogical representation are more effective than illustrations possessing literal representation when the instructional function to be served is clarification of nonphenomenal information.

THE INTERACTIVE-COMPENSATORY EFFECTS OF TEXT SCHEMA POSSESSION, TOPIC FAMILIARITY, SIGNALING, AND TEXT DIFFICULTY LEVEL ON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION

Order No. DA8428259

KINNEY, MARTHA ANN, PH.D. *The University of Iowa*, 1984. 197pp.
Supervisor: Associate Professor Joyce E. Hood

High school student ability to identify the main ideas of an expository passage and to organize these ideas into a summary was investigated in light of both the Kintsch and van Dijk (1978) model of comprehension and an interactive compensatory model of comprehension (Freebody & Anderson, 1983). The two purposes were: (1) to determine whether or not high school students have a schema to adversative text and (2) to examine the interactive effects of the familiarity of the passage content, the amount of signaling present and the test difficulty level on students' performances.

Text schema was defined by the student's ability to organize a scrambled passage. In order to measure the effects of text characteristics on student use of this schema, they were asked to identify the main ideas of a passage by rating their importance level and to write a summary of another passsage.

Results showed students able to identify more main ideas correctly when the material was signaled. Bright students performed more competently than average students particularly when the topic was familiar. In the summary analyses, students included more macro, main idea, and detail statements when the topic was familiar. They included more main idea and detail statements when the text was easy. However, they included more macro statements when the text was difficult and signaled. This latter interaction can be explained by Freebody and Anderson's "minimum effort" principle. Students recalled more details when the text was unsignaled. Bright students performed better than average ability students in all analyses except the detail analysis. There were several interactions with difficulty and ability that supported the "bottle-neck" hypothesis of Lesgold and Perfetti (1978), with average students performing as well as bright students when the material was easy. A chi-square analysis showed that most students can use text structure to organize their summaries when the topic is familiar. It was concluded that while most students have a schema for adversative text, the ability to use it to choose important ideas and write them in a summary is influenced by topic familiarity, signaling, text difficulty and ability.

QUESTION UNDERSTANDING: EFFECTS ON CHILDREN'S COMPREHENSION OF STORIES

KORMOS, LILLI, PH.D. *McGill University (Canada)*, 1984.

This study investigated the effects of different types of questions on discourse comprehension. In addition, it examined performance on questions and its influence on comprehension. Within a theoretical framework of discourse processing, the research focused on question type, passage structure, and individual differences in comprehension. Comprehension was measured by analyzing propositions recalled and inferred during free recall. Performance on questions was measured by analyzing answers for the presence of particular types of inferences.

Third grade children read selected fictional passages, answered questions about them, and recalled them. Results revealed that the effects of questions on comprehension are complex, interacting with passage structure, reading level, and response type. Findings also indicated that questions influence the selective processing of propositional information in text. Question-answering performance was found to reflect an interaction between question type and passage structure. Furthermore, ability to generate the appropriate inferences in responding to questions facilitated text comprehension.

AN ANALYSIS OF THE PROCESS OF AMBIGUITY RESOLUTION (DISAMBIGUATION) IN SENTENCE PROCESSING

Order No. DA8422279

LOEFFLER, WILLIAM ROBERT, PH.D. *The University of Michigan*, 1984. 167pp. Chairman: Donald E. P. Smith

Several models have been advanced in the literature pertaining to the process of ambiguity resolution known as disambiguation. The key models include: (1) The MacKay Model; (2) The Schvaneveldt Model; (3) The Single Meaning/Multiple Meaning Hypothesis; (4) The Selective Access Hypothesis; and (5) The Prior Context Hypothesis.

This dissertation, through means of a literature search and a field experiment, attempts to sort the usefulness of these models according to their validity with respect to a large ambiguity edifice, in this case a paragraph from the U.S. Bankruptcy Code. A test instrument was developed which elicited responses through a progressively more complex and structured set of questions about the ambiguity in the sentences. These data were analyzed according to dominant response characteristics and by means of Pearson *r* correlations for relationships between linguistic level, order of processing, and subjects' decision-making.

Test data were consistent with evidence for the above-mentioned models, but restricted their use to particular steps within a general process of disambiguation. The data showed surface structure to be a less important factor in disambiguation than lexical and underlying/symbolic structures for the tasks performed. Data also show context influences in the decision-making process of ambiguity resolution. The literature review and test data are incorporated into a proposed general paradigm of the disambiguation process which interfaces knowledge-based mental activities with structure-based mental activities.

The general paradigm of the disambiguation process follows order-of-processing steps in the following manner: (1) Associate memory retrieval based on prior context or previous knowledge-base; (2) Scanning of the three fundamental linguistic levels for the purpose of locating the "field" in which the ambiguity resolution is to occur; (3) Problem-solving within the selected linguistic level; (4) Tentative ambiguity resolution (disambiguation) based on a meshing of the lexical and underlying correlations; (5) Evaluative feedback of the resolution based on tentative utilization; and (6) More permanent integration of the resolution into the total language context or "field at a given time."

THE RELATIONSHIPS AMONG LITERAL AND INFERENTIAL READING COMPREHENSION SKILLS AND SELECTED COGNITIVE PROCESSES

Order No. DA8425897

LUKES, WILLIAM GEORGE, JR., ED.D. *University of Miami*, 1984. 141pp. Supervisor: Dr. Helen K. Smith

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationships among the levels of achievement in literal and inferential reading comprehension skills and the cognitive functions of analytic field approach cognitive style, conceptual tempo cognitive style, and the hypothesis (H) theory.

A population of 305 sixth-grade students was selected from two Dade County, Florida, sixth-grade centers. They were given the Petrie Reading Comprehension Test. Based on their reading scores subjects ($N = 48$) were assigned to four sample reading comprehension groups of Low Literal-Low Inferential, High Literal-Low Inferential, Low Literal-High Inferential, and High Literal-High Inferential.

The subjects were given three cognitive instruments. The Children's Embedded Figures Test classified their analytic field approach cognitive styles. The Matching Familiar Figures Test classified their conceptual tempo cognitive styles. The hypothesis (H) probe technique classified their strategies in concept-attainment for the hypothesis (H) theory.

The data were analyzed by means of *t* tests, discriminant function analyses, and Cohen's kappa. The hypotheses, in the directional form, were tested at the .05 level.

The combination of scores from the hypothesis (H) probe technique and the Matching Familiar Figures Test significantly discriminated across the four groups ($p < .005$).

The same two variables discriminated between the combined groups which reflected total low versus high inferential skills ($p < .005$), the two sample groups which contrasted both literal and inferential skills ($p < .001$), and the two sample groups which contrasted low versus high inferential skills under low literal conditions ($p < .001$). These two discriminating variables were measuring significantly different discriminant dimensions for each comparison and had little shared variance.

Common thinking processes were found in both the cognitive functions, which were exhibited in the types of concept-attainment strategies and conceptual te[illegible] and the reading comprehension skills. The stronger discrimi[illegible]ower between certain reading comprehension groups gave [illegible]ble clues about the relationships between literal and inferential [illegible]mprehension processes. When the literal comprehension skills were weak, the involvement of concept-attainment strategies and capacities for selecting correct solutions were apparent in inferential comprehension skills.

SIGNS OF ATTENTION TO MEANING: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF COMPREHENSION IN THE BEGINNING READING PROCESS

Order No. DA8500099

MCCUELLAN, JEAN GODSMAN, ED.D. *University of Massachusetts*, 1984. 255pp. Director: Associate Professor Judith W. Gourley

The role of comprehension in the beginning reading process has been a debated issue among reading theorists and practitioners. Research on the issue, however, has been limited by the nature of existing measures and contexts studied. In this study, the researcher used naturalistic procedures to explore new measures of comprehension in a "whole language" context. She observed and interviewed children in a kindergarten classroom over a nine-month period, seeking to identify behaviors suggesting attention--or inattention--to comprehension as children began to read (largely without direct instruction).

Numerous "signs of attention to meaning" emerged from the data: intonation shifts, occurring as children appeared to question meaning-loss predictions and assert their achievement of meaning; picture references, accompanying pauses as children worked on difficult words; commentary (both verbal and nonverbal), reflecting readers' satisfaction or dissatisfaction with a word read; and paraphrasing, a last resort for some children when unable to achieve a meaningful graphic match. While these signs occurred in reading both with and without error (or miscue), their significance is perhaps greatest when accompanying miscues that appear to lose meaning, often suggesting meaning retrieval (through final paraphrase) or at least concern with meaning. The data support argument that comprehension is actively involved in the beginning reading process.

The data also suggest that the beginning reading process varies from child to child and with changes in contextual factors such as text familiarity and setting. Contextual variation appeared to affect both children's attention to meaning and reading "style" (combined attention to print and fluency). The data do not support clear demarcation of beginning reading into stages. Further, evidence was not found of extensive "non-response" reading, contrary to some earlier studies in other contexts.

Children's statements added access to the insider's view of the reading process, in many cases confirming or supplementing observed data. A "sentence probing" procedure emerged from the study, augmenting elicited statements. The simple sentence probing technique involves asking a child, following reading, how she figured out a sentence, word by word.

The study suggests further exploratory research on comprehension in beginning reading.

A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF THE ELEMENTARY AGE CHILD'S INTERACTION WITH STORY Order No. DA8424243

MILES, DAVID RICHARD, ED.D. *Columbia University Teachers College*, 1984. 140pp. Sponsor: Professor Maxine Greene

It was the purpose of the study to explore, describe, and analyze the process by which children at various age levels within the elementary classroom make sense and make meaning from literary works over time.

The methodology was qualitative, employing an adapted use of ethnography for educational research. The study included a first, second, third and fifth grade. Story experiences were set up for these classes which included multiple oral readings of four stories, open-ended discussions, drawing and dramatic activity around the story.

The data primarily emerged from interviews done with a portion of each class after each story experience. A secondary data source was teacher observation.

The analysis was done in two stages. The first stage identified patterns and themes in the children's response to the stories. The second stage was interpretive. This stage related the data to existing theory and research in the cognitive, affective and imaginative domains. A phenomenological approach was also used to explore how children made unique personal relationships with the stories.

The findings confirmed the existence of developmental patterns of story schema and a tendency toward literalism in younger children that has been noted in previous research. At the fifth grade level there emerged patterns which showed the ability to relate life experience to the story material. The findings also pointed out how individuals often departed from the patterns that have been formalized in the research.

A perspective was formulated from the findings of the present study and the existing research on the pedagogical dimensions of working with literature in the elementary classroom.

COMPARISON OF THE EFFECTS OF CONTINUOUS AND INTERMITTENT PURE TONE AT LOW AND HIGH FREQUENCIES ON READING COMPREHENSION

PELLETIER, PIERRE N., ED.D. *University of Southern California*, 1984. Chairman: Professor Frederick Knirk

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of continuous and intermittent pure tone noise at low and high frequencies at a dB level of 70, in comparison with quiet condition on a reading comprehension test. The comprehension test involved a task of a high cognitive level ("evaluation" in terms of Bloom's taxonomy).

One hundred volunteers, undergraduate students with normal hearing were randomly assigned to five experimental conditions: (1) Quiet, (2) 70 dB continuous noise 500 Hz, (3) 70 dB intermittent noise 500 Hz, (4) 70 dB continuous 8000 Hz, (5) 70 dB intermittent 8000 Hz. The experimentation took place in sound proof studio and the five conditions were heard through earphones. An audiometer generated the sound and an automatic ON/OFF switch was used to generate the intermittent noise (1 sec. noise, 5 sec. no noise).

Data were analyzed by ANOVA and the Dunn's procedure was used to analyze the a priori nonorthogonal comparisons on the effect of the sound on performance, noise, gender, GPA and age being the independent variables. The score and the number of questions answered in 30 minutes being the dependent variables. Also the Pearson Correlation coefficient was computed to study the influence of GPA upon the two dependent variables.

The analyses indicated that the noise conditions were significantly ($p < .05$) more detrimental on the score performance than the quiet condition. No significant difference was found between continuous and intermittent sound. The high frequencies were significantly more detrimental than the low frequencies. No significant difference was found on the quantity of work done from the quiet condition to the noise conditions. No significant difference was found between gender as between age. The correlation between score and GPA was moderate and low between GPA and quantity of work.

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RELATIONSHIPS OF THE AGE AND SEX OF PRESCHOOL CHILDREN TO THEIR PERFORMANCES ON TASKS OF STORY SCHEMA: SEQUENCE, INCONSISTENCIES, STORY COMPLETION, AND STORY TELLING Order No. DA8421262

SHEBLE, JANICE RUTH, ED.D. *University of Maryland*, 1983. 172pp. Supervisor: Dr. Olivia N. Saracho

The purpose of this research was to observe outward manifestations of story schema in preschool children. The null hypotheses stated that positive relationships would not be found between performance on tasks of story schema and the age and the sex of the child. The population in this research was ninety eight (98) children enrolled in a private, Christian preschool. In individual sessions, conducted by the researcher or a trained assistant, the children were asked to react or respond to four types of tasks pertaining to facets of story schema. The four types of tasks were: determining logical sequences from scrambled pictures, detecting and correcting inconsistencies in script-type stories, story completion of a story stem, and story telling using manipulative props (toys). All interviews were tape recorded and transcribed later for scoring.

Materials for the tasks were devised by the researcher and field tested in a pilot study. Reliability of the scorings was established by an inter-scorer procedure. Reliability of the tasks was estimated by a test-retest procedure and by comparative analyses.

Scores obtained were subjected to regression and other analyses. In some of these analyses, the scores of the children were grouped according to their ages, three, four, or five and by the sex of the child for the specific purpose of the acceptance or rejection of the null hypotheses.

Findings indicated that the age of the child was positively related to performance on the tasks of story schema. The sex of the child was not positively related to performance on tasks of story schema.

Implications for instruction drawn from this research include using these facets of story schema in classroom activities to build the story schemata of young children as foundations for reading comprehension.

Implications for further research include suggestions for observing performances on tasks of story schema by older children, or adapting the materials for other observations.

READING AS SIGNIFICATION Order No. DA8429377

SIEGEL, MARJORIE GAIL, ED.D. *Indiana University*, 1984. 523pp. Chairperson: Dr. Robert F. Carey

Within the framework of the doctrine of signs, or semiotics, the construction of meaning is a process of signification; yet reading is typically modeled and researched as if it entailed only the lesser cognitive/semiotic process of representation. This research conceptualized and investigated reading from a semiotic perspective in order to explore how readers create textual meanings, that is, interpretations of written materials. The study's design was based on the principle of prior ethnography and employed data collection techniques common to field studies: participant/intervention and interviewing. Fieldwork was conducted over a seven month period in one fourth grade classroom. The primary heuristic was an instructional strategy lesson, introduced after a three month period of prior ethnography, that called on readers to sketch their interpretations of materials read. The lessons and interviews were audio- and video-taped, detailed field notes were kept, and all sketches were collected.

Data analysis emerged in the course of the study and focused on three dimensions: the inter-relationship of fieldworker and respondents, the contextual constraints and resources in operation during the lessons, and the drawings that were created. Findings suggest the children's interpretations were influenced by their embedded theories of the social situation, their skills as artists, and the nature of the activity of sketching. Within-class friendships and interest also played major roles in the process of constructing meaning. Drawings were created through the process of invention in which extant codes were intertwined to propose a new code that had

significatory potential.

From the theoretical and methodological perspective of semiotics it is more efficacious to view reading as more than mere representation. This calls for a reconsideration of models of direct instruction and the continued exploration of the potential which transmediation across sign systems holds for curriculum development.

DIFFERENTIAL EFFECTS OF PARAPHRASED MAIN IDEA QUESTIONS ON PROSE COMPREHENSION AND RETENTION

Order No. DA8416943

SLOBODY, LAURIE TOWNE, ED.D. *Harvard University*, 1984. 181pp.

The effectiveness of questions in facilitating learning from print has become a popular topic of research. A body of literature now exists which examines the reasons for and the effects of presenting questions with text. Called the study of "adjunct questions," this literature suggests that questions cause readers to process text differently than they normally would. This different processing, in turn, results in different learning.

Although research on lower-level adjunct questions is extensive, research on higher-level questions is limited. The study of paraphrased questions, in particular, is almost non-existent. Only a few such studies can be found and none has investigated young children or readers of varying ability. Almost none has explored the issue of text/question proximity nor been conducted under naturalistic conditions (i.e., with unlimited reading/study time and text review permitted during question answering). To provide much-needed data in these areas, the current study was undertaken.

This study sought to determine: (1) Does asking paraphrased main idea questions with text increase a young reader's learning?; (2) Where is the best placement for such questions?; (3) Do the learning effects produced by these questions vary according to a reader's ability?; (4) For certain ability students, does the location of post-paraphrased main idea questions matter?; and (5) How much of the variance in questions' learning effects can be accounted for by reader's ability or inability to answer adjunct questions?

Two hundred and thirty-six sixth graders were randomly assigned within reading ability groups to one of three experimental conditions. These conditions varied the mode of adjunct question presentation (i.e., interspersed with text, massed at end, and no questions). An excerpt from an existing social studies text served as the experimental material, with twelve experimenter-constructed paraphrased "main idea" questions used in question treatments. Each subject read the text under his/her assigned treatment and under naturalistic conditions. They answered on a worksheet any questions encountered. One day later a criterion test comprised of the same questions was administered to assess "intentional" learning. Scores from this text were analyzed using one-way and two-way analyses of variance to reveal treatment differences and aptitude-by-treatment interactions. . . . (Author's abstract exceeds stipulated maximum length. Discontinued here with permission of author.) UMI

THE INFLUENCE OF MOTIVATION ON THE COMPREHENSION AND COMPREHENSION MONITORING OF NINTH-GRADERS

Order No. DA8504107

STONE, NANCY ROSE, PH.D. *The University of Akron*, 1985. 244pp.

This experimental study sought to show that ninth-graders given a goal for reading would have better inferential comprehension than ninth-graders without a reading goal. Part I had 238 subjects and used inferential statistics; Part II had 18 subjects and used descriptive and qualitative analysis. In each part the treatment group was given a purpose for reading and a criterion for achievement; the control group was given neither purpose nor criterion.

In Part I, students at three levels of reading ability read a short story and chose statements of possible inferences to be made from the story. The two comprehension monitoring measures were (a) the number of correct literal statements from the story which supported the inferences, and (b) the level of confidence in the correctness of answers. In Part II, each student individually read the story, summarized it, and answered text-implicit inferential questions. The comprehension monitoring measures were the same as those in Part I.

Results for Part I were that the stated goal did not significantly improve comprehension scores, although significant main effects for reading level were found. The goal did influence the comprehension monitoring of poor readers and readers without a goal; poor readers with a goal had dramatically higher scores on both measures than poor readers without a goal. Results for Part II were that readers with a goal made more spontaneous and elicited inferences, and a wider variety of inferences than readers without a goal. Poor readers with a goal scored better than good and average readers with a goal, while good readers with a goal scored lower than good readers without a goal.

The conclusion was that poor readers had greater extrinsic motivation and were thus aided by the teacher-generated goal. Good readers had greater intrinsic motivation, which was diminished along with their performance by the teacher-generated goal. The inability of the goal to improve comprehension in Part I could be due to procedural difficulties or to the nature of the task; students in Part I did not have to elaborate on what they read as did students in Part II.

THE RELATIONSHIP OF LEVEL OF SCHEMA TO SELECTED READING VARIABLES

Order No. DA8419082

SWAGER, CHRISTINE LOUISE, PH.D. *University of South Carolina*, 1984. 194pp. Chairman: Dr. Michael D. Rowls

A synthesis of the schema-theoretical and the psycholinguistic models of reading provided a paradigm for studying the relationship between level of schema and selected reading variables. Seventy-three students in third through sixth grade read orally: (1) an expository passage for which they had available a schema or knowledge framework for the topic, and (2) an expository passage for which they had no available schema. The availability of a schema for a topic was determined by a free-response technique. Reading processes such as oral reading strategies, mediation strategies, and comprehension as a process were quantified by miscue analysis. Comprehension as a product was measured by an 8-item objective test administered immediately following the oral reading. A 2 x 4 (schema level x grade) repeated measures ANOVA was utilized with level of schema (high and low) as the repeated measure. No main effects for level of schema for the use of grapho-phonic level of information emerged. The main effect for level of schema ($p < .01$) was confined to the semantic level of information utilized and to the variables, Semantic Acceptability, Meaning Stability and Process Comprehension, to which semantic processes contribute. Main effects for level of schema for time and frequency of hesitations were demonstrated ($p < .01$) with students reading high schema passages significantly faster and with fewer hesitations than low schema passages. No main effect for level of schema for comprehension product emerged suggesting that the availability of a schema does not guarantee activation and utilization of the schema

PROPOSITION ANALYSIS AND THE TEXT COMPREHENSION AND PRODUCTION MODEL IN ADJUNCT QUESTION RESEARCH

Order No. DA8427116

TILDEN, STEPHEN, PH.D. *University of California, Berkeley*, 1984. 409pp.

Proposition analysis allows for use of free recall protocols rather than test questions for measuring adjunct question effects, and the Text Comprehension and Production model supplies cognitive mechanisms that can be used to describe how adjunct questions operate. A text and two kinds of adjunct questions (confirming and integrative) in two positions within the text (pre and post) were read by two samples, 110 senior high school students and 42 university freshmen and sophomores. These subjects wrote essays and completed a criterion test. A planned analysis addressed missing data, group equivalence, and hypotheses regarding overall free recall protocol scores and criterion test scores. A post hoc analysis addressed expected patterns in free recall reproduction of the major ideas in the text.

It was concluded that the criterion test and the overall free recall protocol scores were not equivalent measures of adjunct question effects. Criterion test scores reflect only those ideas represented by the test items, and only within the range presented by the possible answers. Free recall does not limit the choice of macropropositions, so post hoc analysis of the frequency and pattern of macroproposition reproduction was possible.

Closer analysis of the essay data from the university sample revealed that when the macropropositions (major ideas) contained in the text were *high* in salience (importance to subjects' control schemata), adjunct questions did not increase their reproduction in the essays in comparison with the control group. However, when the macropropositions were *low* in salience, integrative adjunct questions in the post-position significantly increased their reproduction levels compared to the control.

Additional analysis revealed significant interactions between salience level and integrative adjunct questions and salience level and adjunct questions in the post position. When major ideas in a text were already perceived by subjects as important to the meaning of the text, asking adjunct questions about them did not increase their reproduction in the essays and therefore was of no instructional value. When major ideas were not perceived by subjects as important to the meaning of the text, asking integrative adjunct questions about them increased their reproduction in the essays and therefore was of instructional value.

These results were interpreted in terms of the Text Comprehension and Production Model.

A COMPARATIVE EVALUATION OF READERS' COMPREHENSIONS AS MEASURED BY FREE RETELLINGS, CUED RETELLINGS, AND HIERARCHICALLY STRUCTURED QUESTIONS

Order No. DA8503160

VAUGHAN, NANCY E., ED.D. *East Texas State University*, 1984. 137pp. Adviser: LaVerne Rorie

Purpose of the Study. The purpose of this study was to investigate the comparability of free written retellings, written retellings with retrieval cues, and hierarchically structured comprehension questions. A second purpose was to describe any differences in immediate and delayed comprehension assessment.

Procedure. The subjects for the study were 89 seventh-grade students. Subjects were asked to read silently a five-page expository reading selection. Next subjects randomly received one of the three assessment devices, the free retelling, the cued retelling, or the hierarchically structured comprehension questions, for completion. Two days later students were asked to complete a delayed measure of comprehension recall. Subjects received the same measurement device they had completed two days previously.

Findings. Based on a descriptive analysis of the data, the findings of the study were: (1) Different measurement devices of reading comprehension produce different profiles of reading comprehension. (2) Free and cued retellings elicit different amounts as well as different types of information. (3) Hierarchically structured comprehension questions limit the comprehension profile to the specific areas probed. (4) Free retellings yield a rich variety of scriptal information. (5) The cued retellings elicit considerably more content-based information. (6) The cued retellings produce less information loss in the delayed measure of reading comprehension than the free retelling protocol. (7) Responses to the hierarchically structured comprehension questions differ little between the immediate and delayed measure of reading comprehension.

Conclusions. The results of the investigation warrant the following conclusions: (1) The comprehension that readers display is largely dependent upon the type of protocol used in the measurement of reading comprehension (2) There is a difference among reading scores derived from free retellings, cued retellings, and hierarchically structured comprehension questions. (3) There is a difference in assessment of comprehension based on protocols administered immediately after reading compared to administration of the same protocols two days after reading an expository passage. (4) Free written retellings elicit a reader-constructed rendering of what was comprehended in an expository passage. (5) Cued written retellings focus comprehension toward content-based information. (6) Hierarchically designed comprehension questions probe text-based comprehension and limit the scope of the comprehension profile that can be generated.

THE ABILITY OF SECOND AND THIRD GRADE STUDENTS TO DRAW INFERENCES AFTER READING SELECTIONS OF PROSE

Order No. DA8502029

WALLACE, RANDALL REED, PH.D. *University of Oregon*, 1984. 140pp. Adviser: Mildred C. Robeck

Comprehension is difficult to investigate because it occurs at a number of cognitive levels which are integrated with the reader's prior knowledge. In particular, the ability of young readers to draw inferences after reading passsages of narrative prose has been inadequately researched. This study examined to what extent second and third grade children make inferences after orally reading two 400 word second grade stories. Variations of reading ability, grade, and sex were analyzed with subject responses to different types of inferential questions.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN A KNOWLEDGE OF LOGICAL CONNECTIVES AND THE RETENTION OF EXPOSITORY MATERIAL

Order No. DA8418766

WILLIAMS, BRENDA REUBEN, PH.D. *Washington University*, 1984. 129pp. Chairman: Bryce Hudgins

The purpose of the present study is to investigate how college students comprehend written language in exposition, or reading comprehension. More specifically, the study examines the effects of the knowledge of logical connectives and the relationships that they imply on the immediate and long-term retention of expository material.

Logical connectives are linguistic forms that link ideas within and among sentences, thereby assisting individuals in generating meanings and in shaping the context in which information is perceived, related, integrated, and consequently remembered.

Eighty college students enrolled in Reading classes were tested with both a Test of Logical Connectives and a Measure of Rote Memory. Using the scores from the Test of Logical Connectives to

ascertain a median, subjects were placed in either the High Knowledge of Connectives Group or the Low Knowledge of Connectives Group. In addition, students were randomly assigned to one of four retention intervals, with each interval consisting of twenty students.

All subjects read an expository, textbook-like passage that contained specific logical connectives. A criterion test based on this passage was administered to the twenty subjects assigned to Retention Interval I to ascertain immediate retention. The remaining sixty subjects were tested by group for delayed retention during the following times: two days, one week, and two weeks. Upon completion of the criterion test, all subjects were administered a questionnaire which was utilized as a method of probing students' perceptions of their own cognitive processing strategies.

Using a subsumption model extrapolated from the assimilation theory of meaningful reception learning, the study shows that students' comprehension of written passages is facilitated by their understanding of logical connectives. This understanding contributes to meaningful learning, and thus increases the probability of extended retention..

Since extended retention is one of the primary goals of schooling, these results have practical implications for education.

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